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Iceland volcano eruption

Friday, 21 May 2010

Latest information received from the Icelandic Meteorological Office indicates that the volcano is continuing to erupt, with the ash plume reaching heights of up to around 14,000 ft. From Sunday the ash cloud is expected to drift in a south-westerly direction over the Atlantic Ocean and UK airspace is not expected to be affected.

While the volcanic activity continues, the Met Office will provide frequently updated information to CAA about the dispersion of the volcanic ash.

The Met Office provides forecasts to the industry to any tolerance of ash that is deemed safe by the aviation regulatory authorities. This advice is based on a combination of observations from satellite, research aircraft and ground based observations along with model simulations and scientific expertise.

Operational decisions on airspace restrictions are the responsibility of CAA and further information on the impacts of the volcanic ash should be sought from them. However, no decision on airspace restrictions will be made more than 24 hours in advance.

Iceland Volcano — Latest forecasts and observations.

Related links:

CAA — UK Civil Aviation Authority

NATS — National Air Traffic Services

Icelandic Met Office: Update on activity

Notes to editors:

- The Met Office is the UK's National Weather Service, providing 24x7 world-renowned scientific excellence in weather, climate and environmental forecasts and severe weather warnings for the protection of life and property.
- As one of only two World Area Forecast Centres, the Met Office regularly advises the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and National Air Traffic Services.
- Met Office forecasters monitor volcanic eruptions as part of the Met Office's role in the global network of nine Volcanic Ash Advisory Centres (VAAC).
- Volcanic ash can be dangerous for aircraft, causing damage, reducing visibility, and potentially clogging engines.
- The Met Office's Environment Monitoring and Response Centre is constantly monitoring the Iceland area. Our first advisory was issued at 1400 on 14 April and they have subsequently been updated every six hours.

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